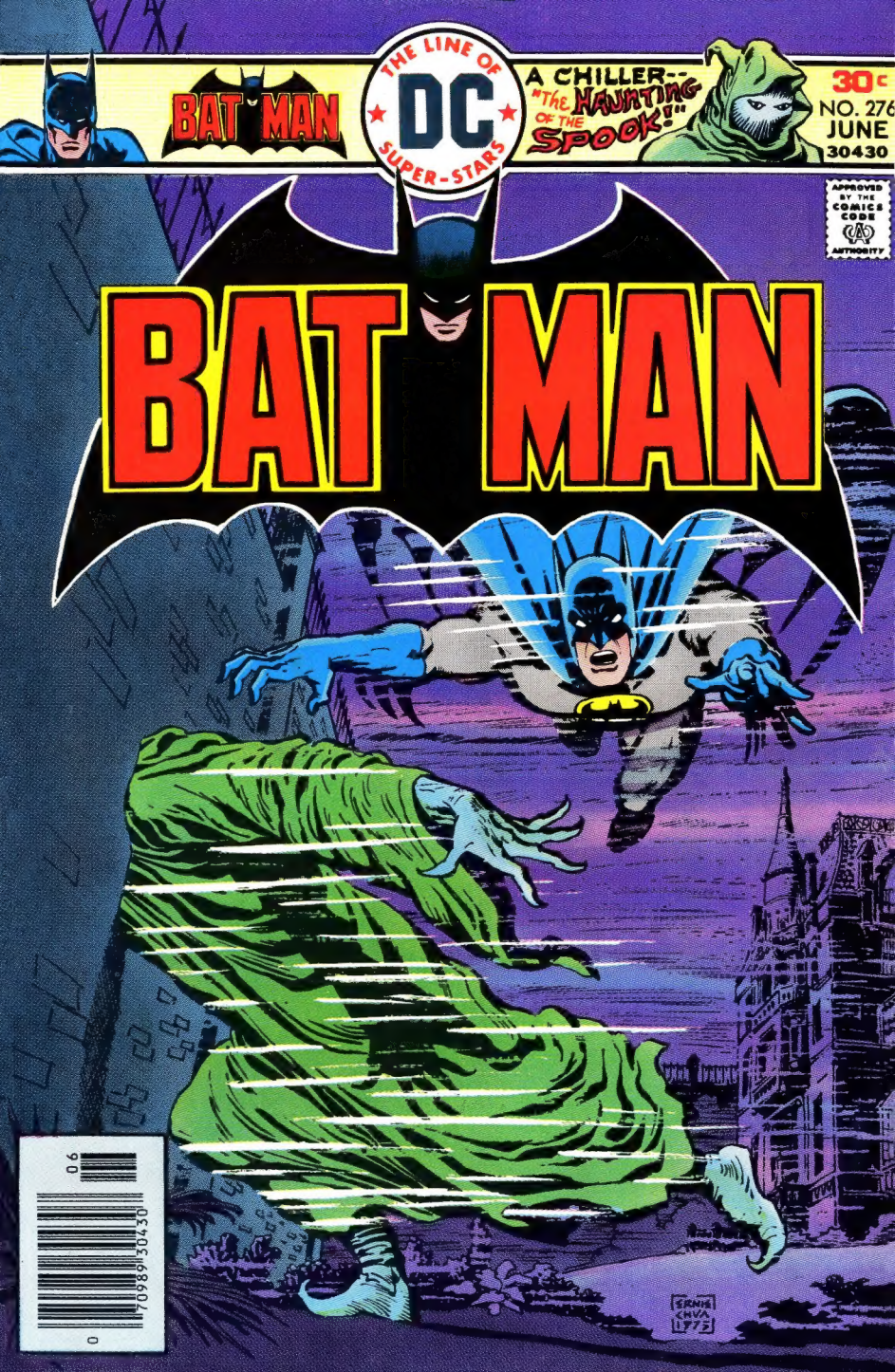
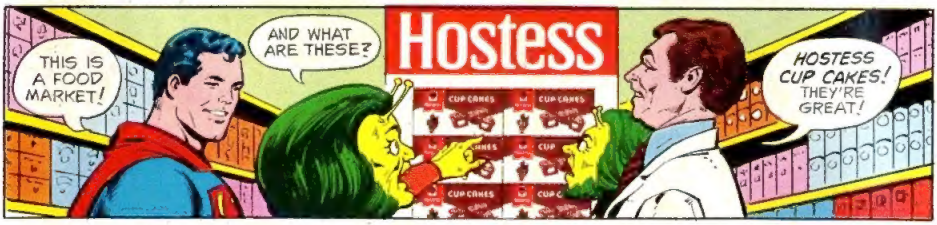

BAT MAN
THE LINE OF SUPER-STARS
DC
A CHILLER--
"The HAUNTING OF THE SPOOK!"
30c
NO. 276
JUNE
30430
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
BAT MAN

ADVERTISEMENT

SUPERMAN SAVES THE EARTH
ZOOMING THROUGH SPACE, SUPERMAN HEADS FOR AN ALIEN PLANET...
MUST REACH THE MEETING OF THE INTERSTELLAR COUNCIL BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!

BUT, SUPERMAN-- AS A NATIVE OF KRYPTON, YOU KNOW HOW PRIMITIVE EARTH IS!
NOT IN EVERY WAY! LET ME TAKE YOU THERE AND SHOW YOU SOME EARTH FOOD!



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THEY SURE ARE! IF EARTH CAN PRODUCE FOOD LIKE THIS, IT DESERVES TO SURVIVE! IN FACT, MAYBE THEY CAN SEND SOME TO US; WE'RE ONLY 2 BILLION MILES AWAY.
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SEND THE BILL TO MY FRIEND CLARK KENT!
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YOU'LL NEVER TAKE ME ALIVE, BATMAN!
YOU'LL HAVE TO KILL ME!
IF THAT'S THE ONLY WAY, SPOOK-- IT'S OKAY WITH ME!
"THE HAUNTING OF THE SPOOK!"
HE PLOTTED THE PERFECT CRIME-- BUT THE--
BATMAN
HAD TO KILL HIM TO MAKE IT WORK!
STORY BY: DAVID V. REED
ART BY: ERNIE CHUA
EDITING BY: JULIUS SCHWARTZ
S-2241

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2:30 A.M.... THE NIGHTBOUND CITY LIES QUIET AS THE BATMAN SWEEPS ACROSS KINGSBORO BRIDGE--ONE OF HIS HABITUAL CROSSINGS--ON ROVING PATROL...
SUDDENLY--DIRECTLY IN THE PATH OF THE BATMOBILE-- AS IT SCREECHES TO A STOP...
NO!
IT CAN'T BE!
SCREEECH
YES, BATMAN, IT'S ME-- VAL KALIBAN--THE SPOOK!
ARREST ME! PUT ME UNDER PROTECTIVE CUSTODY!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I'M BEING HAUNTED BY THE GHOSTS OF TWO MEN I'VE MURDERED!
THEY'RE TRYING TO AVENGE THEIR DEATHS BY PULLING ME INTO THE BEYOND!
SAVE ME! HOLD ON TO ME!
HUH? I WENT RIGHT THROUGH HIM!
HE'S FADING AWAY--!
HURRY! HELP ME! SAVE ME!
GONE! LEFT ME EMPTY-HANDED...
...AND SPOOKED!

NEXT MOMENT--FROM OUT OF THE DARKNESS...
POW!
GOOD!--THIS SPOOK IS SOLID!
WOP!
}OWW!{ NO DOUBT ABOUT IT!
BUT EVEN AS THE DEADLY COMBAT CONTINUES--SOMETHING ELSE IS HAPPENING!
--SOMETHING THE BATMAN HAS NO POSSIBLE WAY OF KNOWING!....
...SUBLIMINAL SUGGESTION--FLASHING AT THE BATMAN AT THOUSANDTHS OF A SECOND--BELOW THE CONSCIOUS LEVELS OF AWARENESS!...
IF THERE'S ANYTHING I DESPISE, IT'S A FOOL--
8 & 31... 10 PM... FRI.
--AND YOU, BATMAN, ARE A HOWLING, RING-TAILED--
KRACK!
LOOKING FOR ME, BATMAN?
--DOUBLE-BARRELED--
8 & 31... 10 PM... FRI.
--REVOLTING FOOL!
KEEP AN EYE ON THAT GIRDER BOLT THE SPOOK'S PRESSING, READER--EVEN IF THE BATMAN DOES NOT!
}CLICK{ AND THE BRIDGE BOTTOM DROPS OUT ON THE BATMAN!...
GOOD-BYE... AND GOOD RIDDANCE!

PLUNK
AND WHEN HE SURFACES--
DOWN, BATMAN... BUT NOT OUT?
I'M IN NO MOOD FOR YOUR MACABRE SENSE OF HUMOR, SPOOK!
AGAIN AND AGAIN HE LUNGES IN FURY--
--ONLY TO ATTAIN--
--A MORE SPECTACULAR DEFEAT--
WHOOOOSH!
VANISHED... IN FLAME!
NOTHING LEFT BUT SOME NYLON WIRE... AND A BURNED BIT OF FABRIC!
I'LL KEEP IN TOUCH, BATMAN--! HA-HA!
WHILE ABOVE-- HIDDEN AMONG THE BRIDGE GIRDERS--THE REAL SPOOK EXULTS!...
HA-HA! GOT WHAT I CAME FOR-- A GRAPH OF THE BATMAN'S BRAIN-WAVES IN A MURDEROUS RAGE--
--A THROWBACK TO MAN'S BASIC KILLER INSTINCT! NOW THE GAME OF KILL BEGINS!
CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING.

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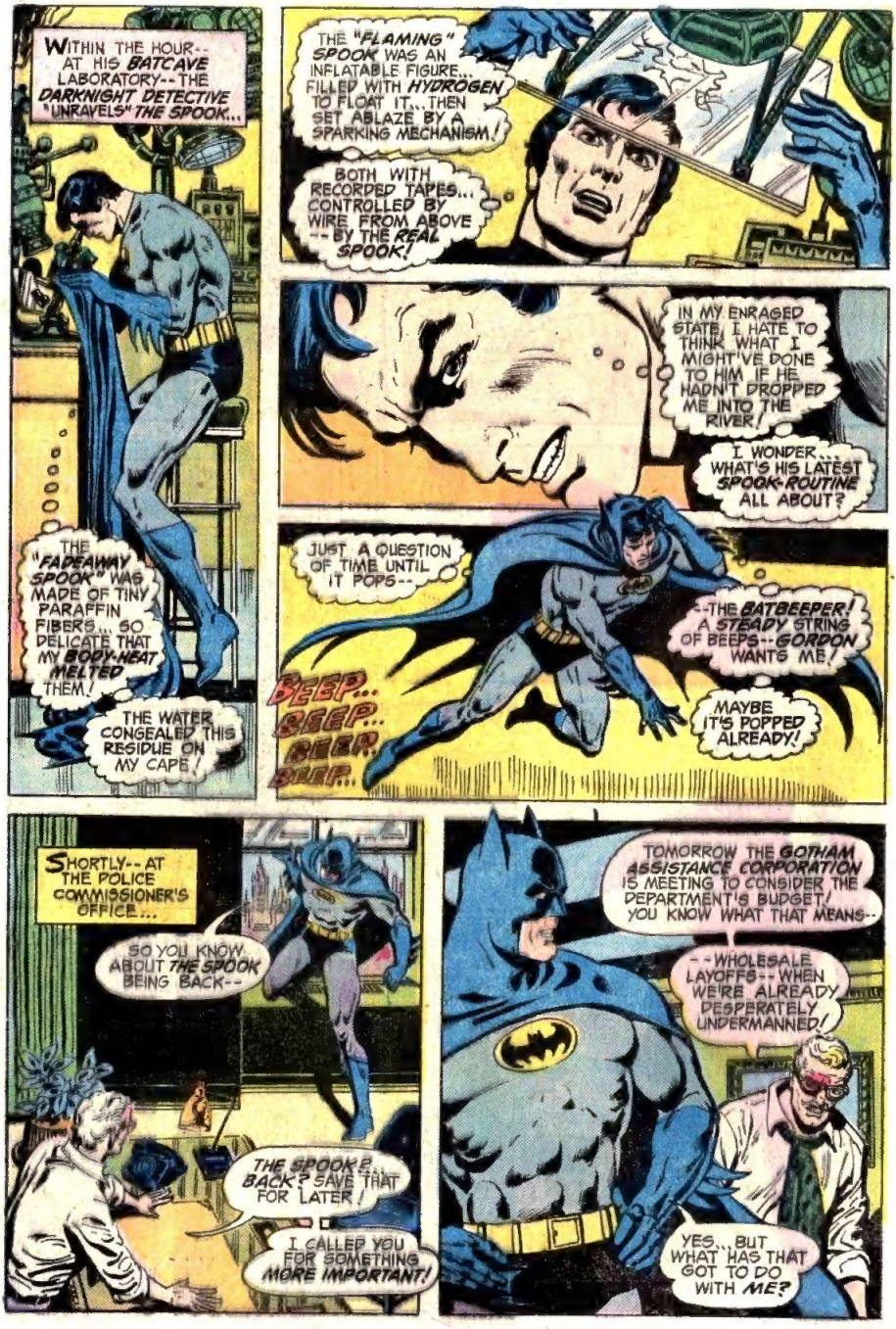
WITHIN THE HOUR--AT HIS BATCAVE LABORATORY--THE DARKNIGHT DETECTIVE "UNRAVELS" THE SPOOK...
THE "FLAMING" SPOOK WAS AN INFLATABLE FIGURE... FILLED WITH HYDROGEN TO FLOAT IT...THEN SET ABLAZE BY A SPARKING MECHANISM!
BOTH WITH RECORDED TAPES... CONTROLLED BY WIRE FROM ABOVE --BY THE REAL SPOOK!
IN MY ENRAGED STATE, I HATE TO THINK WHAT I MIGHT'VE DONE TO HIM IF HE HADN'T DROPPED ME INTO THE RIVER!
I WONDER... WHAT'S HIS LATEST SPOOK-ROUTINE ALL ABOUT?
THE "FADEAWAY SPOOK" WAS MADE OF TINY PARAFFIN FIBERS... SO DELICATE THAT MY BODY-HEAT MELTED THEM!
THE WATER CONGEALED THIS RESIDUE ON MY CAPE!
JUST A QUESTION OF TIME UNTIL IT POPS--
--THE BATBEEPER! A STEADY STRING OF BEEPS--GORDON WANTS ME!
MAYBE IT'S POPPED ALREADY!
BEEP... BEEP... BEEP... BEEP...
SHORTLY--AT THE POLICE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE...
SO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE SPOOK BEING BACK--
THE SPOOK? BACK? SAVE THAT FOR LATER!
I CALLED YOU FOR SOMETHING MORE IMPORTANT!
TOMORROW THE GOTHAM ASSISTANCE CORPORATION IS MEETING TO CONSIDER THE DEPARTMENT'S BUDGET! YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS--
--WHOLESALE LAYOFFS--WHEN WE'RE ALREADY DESPERATELY UNDERMANNED!
YES... BUT WHAT HAS THAT GOT TO DO WITH ME?

BRUCE WAYNE IS REPRESENTING HIS BANK AT THAT MEETING! HE'S THE KEY VOTE!
YOU'VE GOT MORE INFLUENCE WITH HIM THAN I HAVE! EXPLAIN OUR SITUATION...
I'LL BE GLAD TO...AND I KNOW HE'LL LISTEN!
NOW ABOUT THE SPOOK--
BLAST THE SPOOK!
IF WE LOSE ANY MORE MEN, WE'LL HAVE A LOT MORE TO WORRY ABOUT THAN THE SPOOK!
NOW...GET GOING!
NEXT DAY... THE G.A.C. HAS BEEN IN MARATHON SESSION... LOCKED IN STUBBORN NEGOTIATION...
...AND THE BATMAN--IN HIS PUBLIC IDENTITY AS BRUCE WAYNE--HAS UNYIELDINGLY SUPPORTED THE DEPARTMENT'S CAUSE...UNTIL--
9:45! I DON'T KNOW WHY...
...BUT I MUST GET OUT OF HERE...NOW!
GENTLEMEN, I'M NOT USED TO THESE HOURS... I FATIGUE EASILY! WE'LL RESUME TOMORROW!
BUT, WAYNE --TOMORROW STARTS THE THREE-DAY HOLIDAY WEEKEND!
WE CAN'T MEET AGAIN TILL TUESDAY!
FINE! SEE YOU THEN!
MINUTES LATER...
THEY CAN'T VOTE WITHOUT ME, SO NO HARM'S DONE!
BESIDES, I HAVE THIS UNEXPLAINABLE URGE...TO BE SOMEWHERE...AND I LIKE TO PLAY HUNCHES!
PRECISELY AT 10 P.M.--AT THE CORNER OF AVENUE B AND 31ST STREET...
MUSEUM OF PRIMITIVE ART
WHAT MADE ME STOP AT THIS MUSEUM?
THERE'S A PRICELESS EXHIBITION GOING ON HERE...
...MIGHT AS WELL CHECK IT OUT!...
ODD--THIS SIDE-DOOR'S UNLOCKED!

INSIDE--A MORE STARTLING DISCOVERY...
BECOMING A COLLECTOR, SPOOK?--IN SUCTION-CUP SHOES?
GET AWAY FROM ME, BATMAN! I'M WARNING YOU--
--YOU'LL NEVER TAKE ME ALIVE!
INSTANTLY--COVERTLY--THE MYSTIC MASTERMIND'S DIABOLICAL WEAPONS COME INTO PLAY AS THE BATMAN ATTACKS--
OTIS--9 PM--SAT.
I'VE HEARD THAT CORNBALL SPEECH BEFORE, SPOOK!
I'VE NEVER KILLED YET--AND I NEVER WILL!
I KNOW... AND YOU KNOW, BATMAN--YOU'LL HAVE TO KILL ME!
YOU ARE A KILLER AT HEART!
OTIS--9 PM--SAT.
KILL! KILL! KILL!

SUDDENLY--
POOOF!
AND WHEN THE SMOKE CLEARS--
?!?
HE OOZED OUT OF MY HANDS-- DISAPPEARED!
CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

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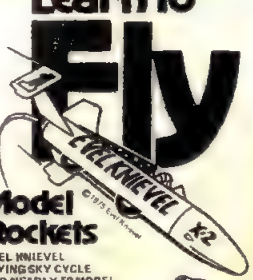

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HE WAS STANDING RIGHT HERE--
--WHEN HE REACHED OUT TO TOUCH THIS WALL--
--LIKE THIS--
AND AS THOUGH SHOT FROM A CANNON--
--THE BATMAN FINDS HIMSELF ON THE MUSEUM ROOF!...
HOW DID IT HAPPEN? A SMOKE-GRENADE OBSCURED EVERYTHING!
A SECRET PRESSURE AREA ON THE WALL... TRIGGERED A SPRING... SHOT THE "FLOOR" UP...
...SIMULTANEOUSLY OPENED THE ROOF--THEN BOTH INSTANTLY RETRACTED!
SMOKE OR NOT, I SHOULD'VE SPOTTED IT...BUT I COULDN'T EVEN SEE STRAIGHT!
IT IS LATER--
WHY DID HE KEEP SHOUTING KILL-KILL-KILL--
--AND WHY DID I FEEL I HAD TO DO IT?
EARLY THE NEXT DAY--COMMISSIONER GORDON IS ON THE BAT BEEPER AGAIN...
YOU FAILED ME, BATMAN! YOUR PLAYBOY BUDDY, BRUCE WAYNE, WALKED OUT ON THAT MEETING LAST NIGHT--LEAVING EVERYTHING UNSETTLED!
YOUR BREAKFAST IS GETTING COLD, SIR!
I'LL CONTACT HIM AGAIN, COMMISSIONER!
IF I KNOW BRUCE, HE'S GOT A DATE TONIGHT--BUT I'LL FIND HIM!
I ONLY WISH I FELT AS CONFIDENT ABOUT THE SPOOK!

THAT NIGHT--8:45 P.M.--AS BRUCE WAYNE ARRIVES OUTSIDE THE HOME OF HIS DATE...
EVENING, MR. WAYNE!
THAT URGE AGAIN--THAT COMPULSION TO BE SOMEWHERE!
I CAN'T RESIST IT--NOR DO I WANT TO!
I'LL APOLOGIZE LATER--BUT RIGHT NOW THIS DATE WILL HAVE TO GIVE WAY TO THE BATMAN!
9 P.M....LIKE A DOWSER--SUDDENLY, SUPERNATURALLY, MAKING A "FIND"--THE MASKED MANHUNTER COMES TO A STOP!...
THE OTIS MANSION... DARK... AWAY FOR THE WEEKEND!
NO POINT WONDERING--LET'S SEE WHAT'S WHAT!
ANOTHER OPEN DOOR? SOMEHOW I EXPECTED IT!
--AND THIS, TOO!
TELL ME, SPOOK--HOW COME YOU GAVE UP YOUR HIGH-CLASS "ESCAPE-INSURANCE" BUSINESS FOR SUCH LOW-DOWN THIEVERY?
I ENJOY KEEPING YOU MYSTIFIED, BATMAN!
9 & 27--12 MID--SUN.
NOW... GET IT OVER WITH! KILL ME!

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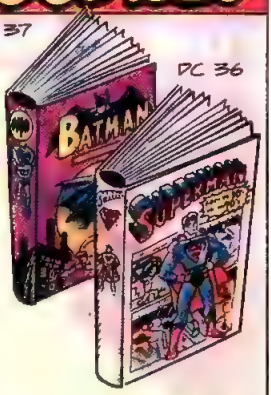

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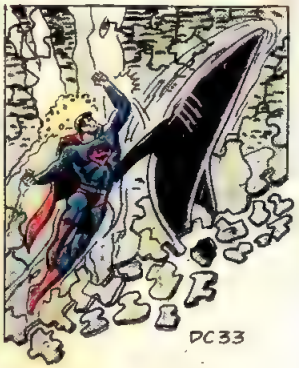

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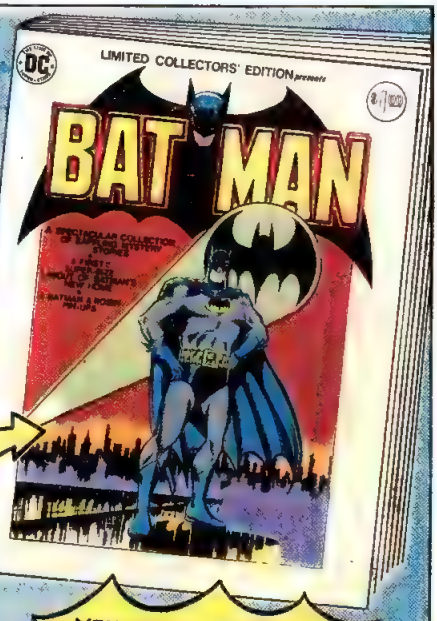

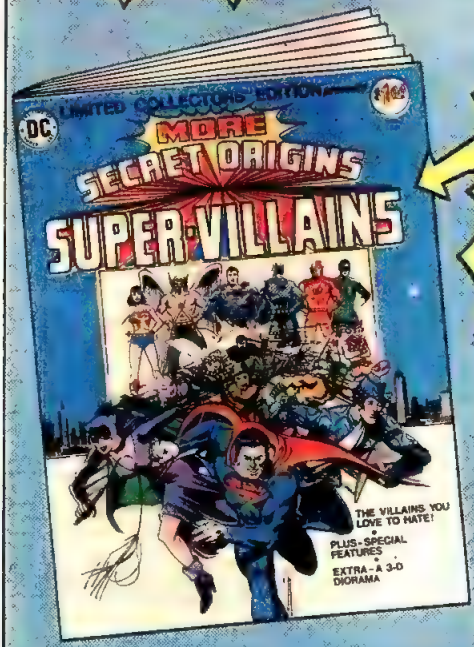

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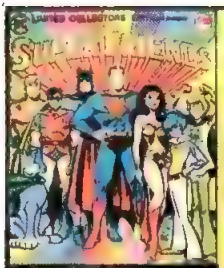

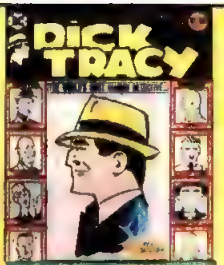

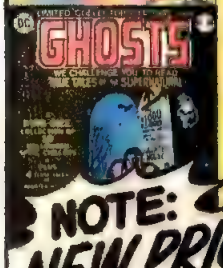

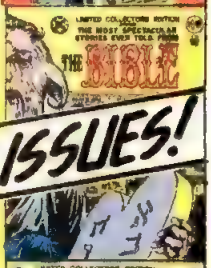

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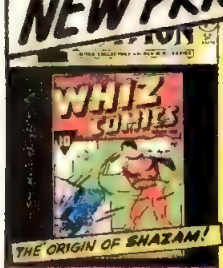

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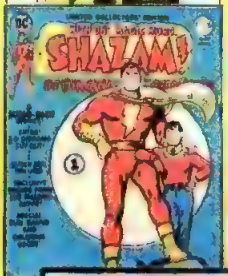

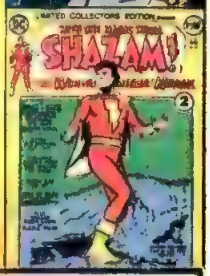

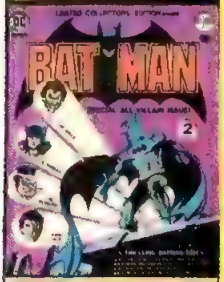

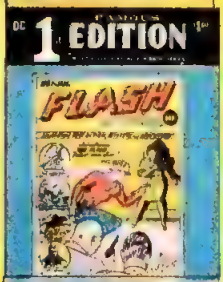

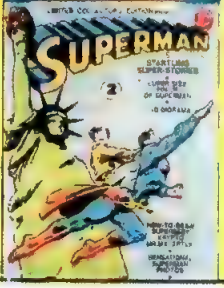

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LIKE A MAN POSSESSED, THE BATMAN EXPLODES INTO ACTION!
YOU'VE SAID IT MORE THAN ONCE--I'M ONLY FLESH AND BLOOD!
KILL ME!
YOU'RE AN AVENGER!
KILL ME!
9 & 27... is MIND... SUN...
KILL, BATMAN!
YOU'RE OUT... OF... CONTROL!
HE'S RIGHT! I'VE GOT TO HOLD BACK!
FOR A BRIEF INSTANT, THE BATMAN STRUGGLES TO CONTAIN HIS FRENZIED WRATH--
--AND IN THAT MOMENTARY HESITATION...
KRAAASH
BAH! YOU'RE NOT READY TO KILL YET!
BUT YOU WILL BE--NEXT TIME!
HE'S TRAPPED IN THE COURTYARD GARDEN--
A FIFTEEN-FOOT WALL AND SIX-FEET OF IRON SPIKES! I'LL NAB HIM BEFORE HE CAN ATTEMPT TO SCALE IT!
AND THEN--A STAGGERING SIGHT!...
GASP!

TWO NIGHTS AGO I WONDERED ABOUT THE SPOOK'S SANITY--
--NOW I'M DOUBTING MY OWN!
BUT I SAW IT! HE WENT THROUGH THE WALL!
RIGHT ABOUT HERE--
AHH, I THOUGHT SO! IT HAD TO BE!
PAINTED BRICKS-- ON A SECTION MADE OF SELF-SEALING RUBBER-- THE KIND THEY USE IN BLOWOUT PROOF TIRES!
IT OPENS AND CLOSES WITHOUT A TRACE!
DEEPLY TROUBLED AND PERPLEXED, THE BATMAN ROLLS HOMEWARD--
A HUNCH ONCE... I'LL BUY THAT!
BUT TWICE IN A ROW-- WITH OPEN DOORS WAITING FOR ME?
NOPE! I'M BEING GUIDED! AND THERE'S ONLY ONE SENSIBLE SCIENTIFIC ANSWER--
--THE SPOOK IS GIVING ME SUBLIMINAL MESSAGES!
BACK TO HIS PENTHOUSE, ATOP THE WAYNE FOUNDATION BUILDING...
I'VE NEVER SEEN MASTER BRUCE SO DISTURBED...
BUT-- SPOOK'S GOT SOMETHING MORE!
A BRAINSTORM SEEMS TO SEIZE ME WHEN HE RAISES HIS RIGHT ARM--AN OVERWHELMING IMPULSE TO KILL --JUST AS HE KEEPS TELLING ME OVER AND OVER!
BUT I KNOW WHAT I WILL DO-- AND WHAT I WON'T!
WHICH MEANS THAT "SOMETHING" IS DOING IT TO ME!
LOOKS LIKE I'LL HAVE TO CHANCE IT AGAIN!
I'LL MAKE MY ARRANGEMENTS THROUGH COMMISSIONER GORDON --AND THEN WAIT FOR THE SPOOK'S NEXT MESSAGE TO "HIT" ME!
CONTINUED ON 35P PAGE FOLLOWING

when I planned to **retire before fifty**

this is the business that made it possible

a true story by John B. Haikey

Starting with borrowed money, in just eight years I gained financial security, sold out at a profit and retired.

"Not until I was forty did I make up my mind that I was going to retire before ten years had passed. I knew I couldn't do it on a salary, no matter how good. I knew I couldn't do it working for others. It was perfectly obvious to me that I had to start a business of my own. But that posed a problem. What kind of business? Most of my money was tied up. Temporarily I was broke. But, when I found the business I wanted I was able to start it for a small amount of borrowed money.

"To pyramid this investment into retirement in less than ten years seems like magic, but in my opinion any man in good health who has the same ambition and drive that motivated me, could achieve such a goal. Let me give you a little history.

"I finished high school at the age of 18 and got a job as a shipping clerk. My next job was butchering at a plant that processed boneless beef. Couldn't see much future there. Next, I got a job as a Greyhound Bus Driver. The money was good. The work was pleasant, but I couldn't see it as leading to retirement. Finally I took the plunge and went into business for myself.

"I managed to raise enough money with my savings to invest in a combination motel, restaurant, grocery, and service station. It didn't take long to get my eyes opened. In order to keep that business going my wife and I worked from dawn to dusk, 20 hours a day, seven days a week. Putting in all those hours didn't match my idea of independence and it gave me no time for my favorite sport—golf! Finally we both agreed that I should look for something else.

"I found it. Not right away. I investigated a lot of businesses offered as franchises. I felt that I wanted the guidance of an experienced company—wanted to have the benefit of the plans that had brought success to others, plus the benefit of running my own business under an established name that had national recognition.

"Most of the franchises offered were too costly for me. Temporarily all my capital was frozen in the motel. But I found that the Duraclean franchise offered me exactly what I had been looking for.

"I could start for a small amount. (Today, less than $1500 starts a Duraclean dealership.) I could work it as a one-man business to start. No salaries to pay. I could operate from my home. No office or shop or other overhead. For transportation, I could use the trunk of my car. (I bought the truck later, out of profits). And best of all, there was no ceiling on my earnings. I could build a business as big as my ambition and energy dictated. I could put on as many men as I needed to cover any volume. I could make a profit on every man working for me. And I could build little by little, or as fast as I wished.

"So, I started. I took the wonderful training furnished by the company. When I was ready I followed the simple plan outlined in the training. During the first period I did all the service work myself. By doing it myself, I could make much more per hour than I had ever made on a salary. Later, I would hire men, train them, pay them well, and still make an hourly profit on their time that made my idea of retirement possible—I had joined the country club and now I could play golf whenever I wished.

"What is this wonderful business? It's Duraclean. And, what is Duraclean? It's an improved, space-age process for cleaning upholstered furniture, rugs, and tacked down carpets. It not only cleans but it enlivens and sparkles up the colors. It does not wear down the fiber or drive part of the dirt into the base of the rug as machine scrubbing of carpeting does. Instead it *lifts out* the dirt by means of an absorbent dry foam.

"Furniture dealers and department stores refer their customers to the Duraclean Specialist. Insurance men say Duraclean can save them money on fire claims. Hotels, motels, specialty shops and big stores make annual contracts for keeping their carpets and furniture fresh and clean. One Duraclean Specialist signed a contract for over $40,000 a year for just one hotel.

"Well, that's the business I was able to start with such a small investment. That's the business I built up over a period of eight years. And, that's the business I sold out at a substantial profit before I was fifty."

Would you like to taste the freedom and independence enjoyed by Mr. Haikey? You can. Let us send you the facts. Mail the coupon, and you'll receive all the details, absolutely without obligation. No salesman will ever call on you. When you receive our illustrated booklet, you'll learn how we show you STEP BY STEP how to get customers; and how to have your customers get you more customers from their recommendations.

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Imagine making up to $100.00 in a single hour

...operating a "business" you can carry in your pocket!

INTERESTED IN MAKING MONEY? Then picture this: A business that you can go into without any special experience . . . that doesn't require any investment but your time . . . that involves only the simplest kind of selling . . . a business you can literally carry in your pocket or purse — BUT a business that our better Dealers report pays them PROFITS as high as $25.00 to $100.00 for a single hour of easy spare-time "work"!

Sound impossible? It isn't! In fact, if you mail this coupon now, you can start in this business, with a chance to enjoy these fantastic profits, *one week from today* . . . as a part-time Merlite Jewelry Dealer!

Merlite Industries, a famous name in Direct Selling for 28 years, has assembled an incomparable collection of the world's most beautiful jewelry, priced to sell and sell FAST at just $6.00 to $84.00. There are over 200 popular men's and women's styles for customers to choose from: rings, earrings, pendants, crosses, fashion accessories, unusual gift items, and much, much more! What's more, every Merlite Creation is furnished with an elegant Gift Case at no extra charge . . . *AND with a sales-clinching Lifetime Guarantee of Satisfaction!*

JUST SHOW . . . AND SELL!

If you're interested in making money — and we mean *real money* — here's your chance! Just *show* Merlite Jewelry to people you know — friends, neighbors, relatives — and we'll give you a 200% — yes, TWO HUNDRED PERCENT — profit on every Merlite item bought from you!

Think of it! When someone buys an $18.00 Merlite Ring from you, *you* keep $12.00! When someone buys a $24.00 Merlite pendant, *you* keep $16.00! Just show our jewelry, write up the orders, and put your money in your pocket!

And by the way, that word "show" is important. Don't even *try* to sell Merlite Jewelry — because it isn't necessary! These lovely creations really do sell themselves — on sight — wherever they're seen! Your only "problem" may be convincing your customers that expensive-looking Merlite Jewelry retails for just $6.00 to $84.00!

SEND TODAY FOR FREE MONEY-MAKING OUTFIT!

Sound like the kind of opportunity you've been looking for? You bet it does! Ready to make money with Merlite Jewelry? Of course you are! And all it takes to get started is a minute, right now, to fill out and mail the coupon below. When we receive it, we'll rush you your complete Merlite Money-Making Outfit: 40-page full-color Catalogue, detailed Profit Manual, Price Lists, Order Forms . . . everything you need to write up your first order — and enjoy your first 200% profits — the day your Outfit arrives!

What does all this cost you? *Not one penny — it's FREE!* What's more, sending for it places you under no obligation whatsoever, nor will you be asked to return this valuable material if you decide not to become a Merlite Dealer!

Make us PROVE to you just how much money YOUR spare time can be worth with Merlite Jewelry — mail the coupon TODAY!

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ALL SUNDAY THE BATMAN WAITS IMPATIENTLY, REVIEWING HIS PLANS! AT NIGHTFALL, HE RESUMES PATROL--READY FOR A RENDEZVOUS WITH THE UNEXPECTED!...
THEN--AT 11:50 P.M.--
THIS IS IT!
AT MIDNIGHT I'VE GOT TO BE AT 9TH AVENUE AND 37TH STREET!
MIDNIGHT--AND THE SPOOK--STRIKE TOGETHER!...
FRANKUM JEWELRY
KRASH
BUT THE BATMAN'S HEADLONG ATTACK SUDDENLY FALTERS... AND--
FRANKL
RAISING HIS RIGHT ARM--HERE IT COMES!
BETTER DO THIS FAST--BEFORE IT REALLY GETS TO ME!
YORK & 4--11 PM--MON.
NOW, BATMAN!
KILL ME!
HE'S NOT BREATHING! NO PULSE...NO PUPIL REFLEXES...NO VITAL SIGNS!
THE BATMAN IS DEAD!
HOW COULD HE DO THIS TO ME?
HE STUMBLED... FELL!
HE'S NOT GETTING UP--NOT MOVING!
WAS IT TOO MUCH FOR HIM? MORE THAN ANY BRAIN COULD TAKE?

AND THEN--AN EPISODE UNPARALLELED IN GOTHAM'S BIZARRE ANNALS OF CRIME--
YOU'VE OUTWITTED ME, BATMAN--ACCOMPLISHED IN DEATH WHAT YOU COULD NEVER DO IN LIFE!
ALL MY WORK... ALL MY PLANS... FOR NOTHING!
YOU FOOL! I WAS THE ONE WHO WAS MEANT TO DIE!
I WOULD HAVE HAD A FUNERAL... BEEN BURIED! YOU DIDN'T KNOW I SPENT TWO YEARS IN INDIA LEARNING SUSPENDED ANIMATION!
REEEEEE
I COULD'VE REMAINED BURIED FOR WEEKS! AND YOU--THINKING YOU WERE A KILLER--WOULD NEVER AGAIN DARE TRUST YOURSELF!
THAT WAS TO BE THE END OF THE BATMAN!
WITH THE SCREAMS OF APPROACHING SIRENS COMING CLOSER AND CLOSER--THE SPOOK FINALLY ENDS HIS RAVING TIRADE AND--
REEEEEE
REEEEEE
I'VE FAILED... FAILED!
THE TRAGIC SCENE PLAYS TO ITS END... TO AN UNSEEN AUDIENCE...
POLICE
THEY'VE GIVEN UP TRYING TO REVIVE HIM--COVERED HIS FACE!
HE'S DEAD... THE CHEAT!

1:10 A.M.--ST JAMES HOSPITAL--WHERE THE MOOD IS ANYTHING BUT FUNEREAL...
YOU WERE OUT ALMOST AN HOUR, BATMAN! HOW DO YOU FEEL?
NEVER BETTER, DOCTOR!
NOW, LET'S LISTEN TO THE MINI-TAPE RECORDER I HAD WORKING WHILE I WAS OUT!
THE SPOOK HIMSELF SEEMS PRESENT. AS HIS VOICE FILLS THE ROOM WITH THE FRENETIC CADENCE OF FRUSTRATION AND DESPAIR...
...NEVER AGAIN DARE TRUST YOURSELF! THAT WAS TO BE THE END OF THE BATMAN!
I WANTED YOU TO CARRY THAT KNOWLEDGE ALL THROUGH YOUR LIFE--TO SEE CRIME BEING COMMITTED ALL AROUND YOU--
--AND BE UNABLE TO LIFT A FINGER AGAINST IT!
GOOD LORD, WHAT A BIZARRE REVENGE... AND IT ALMOST WORKED!
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO NOW, BATMAN?
BRING HIM IN, COMMISSIONER! --WHAT ELSE?
BUT WHERE WILL YOU FIND HIM?
AT THE MOMENT, I DON'T KNOW WHERE--BUT WHEN THE TIME COMES, I'LL BE THERE!
NEXT NIGHT--AT THE SUBLIMINALLY APPOINTED TIME AND PLACE --YORK & 4TH...
THERE HE IS!--AND UNDOUBTEDLY DOESN'T REALIZE WHY HE HAD TO COME HERE--
--EVEN THOUGH HE THINKS I'M DEAD!
AS THE SPOOK DEPARTS--THE MASKED MANHUNTER FOLLOWS...
THE TWO-WAY REFLECTING LENSES I WORE LAST NIGHT SENT HIS OWN SUBLIMINAL MESSAGE BACK TO HIM!
WONDER WHAT HE THINKS ABOUT NO ANNOUNCEMENT YET OF MY "DEATH"? HUSHING IT UP--?

THE TRAIL LEADS TO A SLUM AT RIVER'S EDGE... LONG ABANDONED HOUSES... LIKE BOMBED-OUT RUINS...
IN HIS HIDEAWAY, THE SPOOK SITS DISCONSOLATE... WRETCHED VICTIM OF HIS OWN HAPLESS PLAN...
IT'S OVER... I MUST FORGET IT!
TOMORROW I GATHER MY GEAR AND MOVE UPTOWN..BACK TO MY SPECIALTY-- THE SPOOK'S GUARANTEED ESCAPE-INSURANCE--
--NO JAIL CAN HOLD YOU... IF YOU PAY THE PRICE!
NEXT MOMENT--
THE BATMAN? NO, IT CAN'T BE! HE'S DEAD!
IT'S HIS GHOST!--I'M BEING HAUNTED!
ANOTHER GHOST!--
--AND ANOTHER!
IT'S WORSE THAN THAT, SPOOK!--THOSE FLAPPING IMAGES AT THE WINDOWS ARE CLOTH--
--BUT I'M REAL!
I'VE STUDIED IN INDIA MYSELF-- AND WHILE I CAN'T MANAGE SUSPENDED ANIMATION FOR MORE THAN AN HOUR OR SO--
--IT WAS ENOUGH!
YOU KEPT TELLING ME TO KILL YOU, SPOOK--
--BUT I WON'T DO IT! YOU'RE NOT GOING TO DIE--
--YOU'LL JUST WISH YOU WERE DEAD!
AND THE BATMAN LOWERS THE...
BOOOM
CRASH!
CONCLUDED ON 3 d PAGE FOLLOWING

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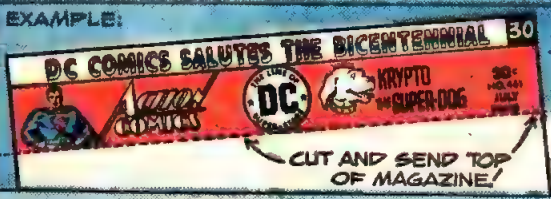

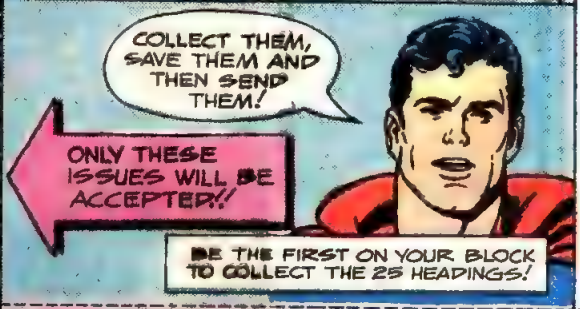
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LATER, AT POLICE HQ.... AS THE BATMAN ENDS HIS RECITAL--
HE'D LEARNED HOW TO RECORD BRAIN-WAVES DURING EXTREME STRESS--
--AT THE BREAKING POINT WHERE THE SAVAGE IN ALL OF US SURFACES... READY TO MURDER!
THEN HE CREATED THIS INSTRUMENT...TO REPRODUCE THAT BASIC, SUPPRESSED KILLER INSTINCT--TRANSMITTING WHAT AMOUNTED TO A COMMAND TO KILL--
--SOMETHING HE HAD LITERALLY UP HIS SLEEVE!
YOU'VE GOT ALL THE ANSWERS, BATMAN--EXCEPT ONE--
HOW AM I GOING TO HOLD ON TO THE SPOOK?
THERE YOU HAVE ME, SIR--
--BUT YOU CAN HARDLY EXPECT ME TO SHARE HIS CELL WITH HIM?
NO, COMMISSIONER, LET'S JUST CONTINUE DOING BUSINESS THE OLD WAY!
I CATCH 'EM--YOU KEEP 'EM!
WAIT! HOW ABOUT BRUCE WAYNE--?
TUESDAY--AND THE G.A.C. HOLDS ITS POSTPONED MEETING--
MR. WAYNE, IT'S BECOME PAINFULLY OBVIOUS WE'LL GET NOWHERE UNLESS WE MEET YOU HALFWAY--
--SO WE'LL AGREE NOT TO CUT THE POLICE DEPARTMENT BUDGET!
SPLENDID!
I MUST SAY, BRUCE, YOU CERTAINLY SEEM LIKE A NEW MAN TODAY!
I GATHER YOU MUST'VE HAD A GREAT WEEKEND?
GREAT? YES... I'LL SETTLE FOR THAT!
END
NEXT ISSUE ON SALE DURING THE SECOND WEEK IN APRIL

JUSTICE FOR ALL INCLUDES CHILDREN
LOOK! PETE AND HIS MOTHER AND FATHER ARE GOING INTO JUVENILE COURT!
I WONDER WHAT THEY GOT HIM FOR.
PETE'S IN REAL TROUBLE NOW.
WE DON'T KNOW ALL THE FACTS YET. MAYBE PETE ISN'T IN TROUBLE AT ALL.
COURT
THIS IS JIMMY. HE'S GOING TO LIVE WITH US FOR A WHILE.
THIS FINE FAMILY HAS AGREED TO PROVIDE A FOSTER HOME FOR JIMMY.
JUDGE, WE ALL KNOW THAT JUVENILE COURT IS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN TROUBLE WITH THE LAW, BUT IT'S MORE THAN THAT, ISN'T IT?
THAT'S RIGHT, SUPERMAN. IN JUVENILE COURT WE ARRANGE FOR FOSTER HOMES, COUNSELING, TUTORING, AND EVEN HEALTH CARE.
PUBLISHED AS A PUBLIC SERVICE BY NATIONAL PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS, INC. IN COOPERATION WITH THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE, THE RESEARCH DIVISION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JUVENILE COURT JUDGES.

LETTERS to the BATMAN

c/o NATIONAL PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS, INC.
75 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10019.

8-2287

Dear Editor:

No one can top Denny O'Neil at capturing that moody atmosphere so wonderfully prevalent in his **Batman** tales. And I doubt if anyone else would be able to weave murder mysteries quite like Frank Robbins did on many occasions for the Caped Crusader's readers. But both these **Bat**-scripters are doing other things and someone else has to fill us in on the adventures of the man who never sleeps. **Batman** readers should be overjoyed that that someone is David V. Reed. He does a fine job at capturing moody atmosphere, weaves some great mysteries and still adds one more thing —ADVENTURE!

Adventure is the only word to describe "The Underworld Olympics '76" (**BATMAN #272**) or, for that matter, any other Reed story. He's got **The Batman** brawling with anyone and everyone, but at the same time always using his deductive powers. Under Dave Reed, **Batman**'s mind calculates at a fevered pace, but it does get side-tracked once in a while, showing that the Masked Manhunter is not infallible.

I could go on and on about Reed, but he's so good (and getting better) that any sample of his work is enough to convince non-believers.

And speaking of work, J.L. Garcia Lopez is dazzling us with his. The layouts and his fight scenes were beautiful and original. And his cover was superb.

BATMAN has not suffered one bit by going monthly, as many fans predicted. Instead, it has improved—immensely!

JOE PELUSO, Brooklyn, N.Y.

(You're not alone in your praise of Reed and Lopez, Joe! Their work is winning them fans all around the country, as our next letter confirms!—BR)

• • • • •

Dear Julie and Bob,

Well, well! Batman versus the world's greatest criminals! Looks like it's going to be one heck of a fight!

Jose Luis Garcia Lopez did a fine job on the cover, but his inside work was even better. His action scenes are as good as Kirby's and his facial expressions on par with Novick's. Great stuff!

It seems that multi-parters bring out the best in David Reed. He has set up quite a plan for the next few issues. But one thing bothers me. There are four continental groups gathered at the meeting—North America, South America, Europe and Asia. Surely Africa and Australia have something to offer—though Antarctica leaves me cold! (Wait a minute! I just thought of an emissary from the South Pole—**The Penguin**!)

MIKE WHITE, Mackinaw, Ill.

(As you've seen, the Africans joined forces with the Asian team, but it appears the criminals from "down under" decided to stay home. As for that Foul Fowl, The Penguin is about as representative of Antarctica as our next letter is of reader reaction to BATMAN #272!—BR)

• • • • •

Dear Cowled Ones:

BATMAN #272 was a first! Now I can imagine Bob Rozakis reading that and thinking, "Here comes a complimentary letter!" Wrong! By "first" I mean that it was the first **Batman** issue that ever caused me to giggle. Then I threw it across the room, something I don't often do.

"Hmmm, why did he do that?" Rozakis will be wondering. I will explain: **Batman** is a figure of the night. He prowls the streets of Gotham, dropping down on evil-doers and causing them to shake and quiver in fear. **That** is **Batman**. The jerk in "Underworld Olympics" was not! There he fights some low-grade morons who want to see who can steal the most gumballs. It was, in a word, forgettable!

A word of advice to David V. Reed: **Batman** does not start off his attack on criminals by yelling, "One vanilla please, with sprinkles!"

A word of advice to Julius Schwartz: I don't want flaming heads, invitations to murders, criminal employment agencies or Underworld Olympics. I want realistic mysteries, figure-of-the-nightism, desperate manhunts, fights against time and maybe a little espionage.

And a word of advice to Bob Rozakis: Letter columns are not for the purpose of showing the reader how a past issue had 100% raves. They should always have at least one pan letter, given a decent amount of space, like this one from . . .

ADAM CASTRO, New Rochelle, N.Y.

(Considering that in the huge pile of mail we've received on BATMAN #272, yours was the ONLY pan letter, isn't it conceivable that there WERE issues with 100% raves? After all, even YOU don't dislike everything we do!—BR)

• • • • •

Dear Editor:

It was great fun watching **The Batman** as he solved the murder mystery in "Underworld Olympics '76", especially since, though he did crack the case, he has no inkling of the motive. David Reed has managed to capture the personality of **Batman**-on-the-hunt—a brisk and determined detective, totally without humor, despite his occasional "cute" lines. I get so tired of heroes who jazz up their fight scenes with "jokes" and witticisms so moronic they defy description. Fortunately, **Batman** will have none of that. He isn't dealing with old **vaude**villains, but criminals so vicious and real we couldn't laugh at them under any circumstances.

SCOTT GIBSON, Evergreen, Colo.

(You certainly won't be laughing at next issue's villain as Batman squares off against The Wringer, who cries "Stop Me Before I Kill" in BATMAN #277 on sale in mid-April.—Bob Rozakis)

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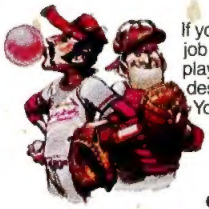

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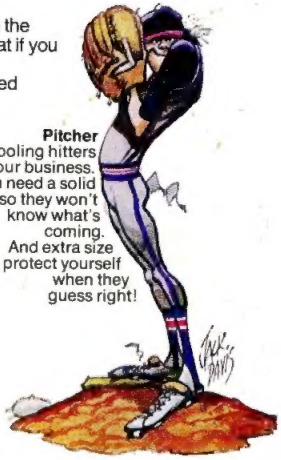
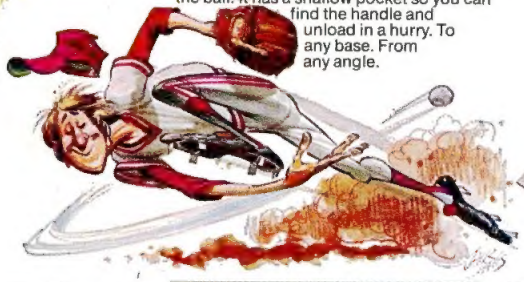


Infield
Your glove has to be as quick as you are. It's a wide glove with squared-off fingers so you can get more of it down in front of the ball. It has a shallow pocket so you can find the handle and unload in a hurry. To any base. From any angle.



YourGlove™ by Spalding.
Exclusive features include: single piece Crown Back design for superior shape and comfort; adjustable thumb and finger loops and wrist strap to fit any hand for superior control; top grain American leather to last a lifetime.

YourGlove™ deserves a shirt to match!

For a T-shirt with your position pictured on the front, send $4.95. Or send $2.95 plus the sales receipt and warranty card from YourGlove™ to:

YourGlove™ T-Shirt
P.O. Box 52546
Atlanta, Ga. 30305

Specify position (pitcher, catcher, 1st base, infield or outfield) and adult size (small, medium or large).

SPALDING®

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